

Introduced by

Senators Larsen, Davison, Dever, Mathern

Representatives Seibel, Streyle

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact section 23-01-42 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to loan repayment programs for social workers and addiction counselors; and to provide
3 an appropriation.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-01-42 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as
6 follows:

7 **43-41.1-01. Loan Repayment - Social Worker - Addiction Counselor.**

- 8 1. The state department of health shall administer a student loan repayment program for
9 individuals who are:
10 a. Licensed as social workers in accordance with section 43-41-04; or
11 b. Licensed as addiction counselors in accordance with section 43-45-05.1.
12 2. The state department of health in conjunction with the board of social work examiners
13 and board of addiction counseling examiners shall annually identify specific
14 geographic areas as underserved. The identification must be based on the number of
15 individuals needing services and the number of available full-time positions for
16 licensed social workers and licensed addiction counselors in a specified area.
17 3. To be eligible for loan forgiveness under this section, an individual must:
18 a. Have graduated from an accredited institution of higher education in this state on
19 or after July 1, 2009;
20 b. Have an outstanding student loan;
21 c. Be employed full-time by the state or a political subdivision of the state, as a
22 social worker or addition counselor, in a geographic area identified as
23 underserved; and
24 b. Submit an application to the state department of health.

- 1 4. An eligible individual may receive a maximum loan repayment of six thousand dollars
2 per year. An individual may not be awarded more than thirty thousand dollars or loan
3 repayment under this section.
- 4 5. The state department of health shall consider applications in chronological order.
- 5 6. Upon verification from the individual's employer that the individual has completed a full
6 year of employment in the public sector of an area identified as underserved, the state
7 department of health shall distribute funds directly to the Bank of North Dakota to
8 repay outstanding loan principal balances for eligible applicants.

9 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general
10 fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$360,000, or so much of the
11 sum as may be necessary, to the state department of health for the purpose of providing a loan
12 repayment program for licensed social workers and licensed addiction counselors, for the
13 biennium beginning July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017.